

THE NEW YORK TIMES, OCTOBER 10, 1963, TRANSCRIPT OF  
PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER 9

Question and Answer Number 2.

Q. Mr. President, could you discuss some of the recent public accounts of C.I.A. activities in South Vietnam, particularly the stories of, or reports of, how the C.I.A. has undertaken certain independent operations, independent of other elements of the American Government that are in South Vietnam?

A. I must say I think the reports are wholly untrue. The fact of the matter is that Mr. McCone, who sits in the National Security Council - I imagine I see him at least three or four times a week. Ordinarily, we have worked very closely together in the National Security Council in the last two months attempting to meet the problems we faced in South Vietnam.

I can find nothing - and I've looked through the record very carefully over the last nine months, and I could go back further - to indicate that the C.I.A. has done anything but support policy. It does not create policy; it attempts to execute it in those areas where it has competence and responsibility.

I know that the transfer of Mr. John Richardson, who is a very dedicated public servant, has led to surmises, but the - I can just assure you flatly that the C.I.A. has not carried out independent activities but has operated under close control of the Director of Central Intelligence operating under the - with the cooperation of the National Security Council and under my instructions. So I think that while the C.I.A. may have made mistakes, as we all do on different occasions - and it has many successes which may go unheralded - in my opinion, in this case it is unfair to charge them as they have been charged. I think they have done a good job.

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